

Cabinet briefed on IMF talks

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet was briefed Saturday on the ongoing satisfactory talks between the government and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The Cabinet, meeting under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Zaid Rifai, also heard a briefing by Tourism Minister Yassir Hikmat on the situation in tourism to the country. The minister said that hotels were full and the tourism industry was flourishing. The minister also outlined plans to improve tourism facilities in the Kingdom. The Cabinet endorsed an agreement with the World Bank under which the Bank would provide finance for a project for educational reform. The Council of Ministers also discussed a draft law for standardisation and metrology that aims basically at developing the mechanism of standardisation and metrology to ensure that Jordanian industries meet international standards and compete favourably abroad.

Jordan Times

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جordan Times Foundation

ACC premiers meet tomorrow

BAGHDAD (R) — Prime Ministers of the four-state Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) will meet in Baghdad Monday to draw up an organisational structure for the new economic bloc. Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and North Yemen formed the group in February with the aim of achieving economic integration and eventually Arab economic unity. Iraqi First Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yassin Ramadan said the prime ministers would discuss the council's organisational structure, headquarters, financial issues and the nomination of a secretary-general, the Iraqi News Agency (INA) reported. He said ACC heads of state, due to meet in Cairo next month, would then consider the ministers' recommendations. Amman has been named as the council's headquarters.

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Arab commentators scorn Shamir proposal Elections will not lead to peace — Khasawneh

By Rana Sabbagh
Reuters

AMMAN — Jordanian officials and newspapers in several Arab countries Saturday scorned an Israeli plan for elections in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip and some Middle East newspapers criticised the U.S. for backing it.

"Holding elections in the occupied territories... will not lead to true peace," Information Minister Hani Al Khasawneh told Reuters.

"What we have heard so far from Israeli prime minister (Yitzhak Shamir) is too far from the real requirements for peace and ignores the positive stand of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Arab countries which was met by appreciation and understanding from the European states and the American administration itself," Khasawneh said.

"We share the opinion of PLO and Egypt that holding elections in the West Bank and Gaza and a half of the intifada will not lead to real peace," he said.

The Palestinian option for peace is clear. Shamir's plan, his rejection of the idea of an international peace conference, his refusal to recognise the Arab identity of the West Bank and Gaza and his persistence on calling the PLO a terrorist organisation will not contribute to the cause of peace," the minister added.

He said Jordan followed with interest the stand of U.S. President George Bush and Secretary

"Israeli military occupation has been identified with such injustices and oppressive practices as would make the idea of free, democratic elections... implausible," an editorial in the English-language Egyptian Mail said.

Al Abram said "after an unspecified transitional period (of autonomy) 'everything' is negotiable (under the plan) except for two things: withdrawal from the land for peace and bailing out with the PLO."

"Why bother, then?" with elections, it asked.

Kuwait's Al Rai Al Aam newspaper said: "America knows fully that the adoption of these ideas (elections) will complicate the situation and increase divisions among Arabs."

Bush endorsed Shamir's plan and said it was up to both sides whether to involve the PLO in peacemaking. He also urged Israel to trade land for peace.

Al Fajr in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) said: "It seems the U.S. and Israel have agreed to liquidate the uprising and sidestep existing facts, foremost of which is the PLO."

The UAE paper Al Ittihad said: "It has become clear that the U.S. decision to open a dialogue with the PLO does not oblige Washington to accept a PLO role in the peace process."

"The U.S. has killed its move (to talk to the PLO), which had been bailed throughout the Arab World," it added.

Other papers also scorned Shamir's plan, under which elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip would lead to "autonomy" for the Palestinians living there.



Dr. Hani Khasawneh

rejects Washington's backing of everything Tel Aviv's chooses.

Palestine Chairman Yasser Arafat Friday rejected the Israeli plan, which Shamir has conceded could lead to the election of PLO supporters.

John Rice of the AP adds: Two elected mayors expelled by the Israeli occupation authorities from the West Bank Friday denounced the Shamir proposal.

"As one who was elected in 1976, I would like to remind Mr. Shamir that who were elected are either expelled or dead or dismissed," said Mohammad Milhem, former mayor of Halhoul, who was expelled in 1980.

"The problem is that they didn't understand that we are one people with one leadership (the PLO)," said Abdul Jawad Saleh, mayor of Al Bireh until he was expelled in 1983.

"Besides, how could your partner in negotiation be under the threat of your guns?" be added in an interview with the AP.

Milhem was one of numerous mayors elected in 1976 who were expelled or thrown out of office by the Israeli authorities.

Bassam Shabazz, mayor of Nablus, had his legs blown off by a bomb set by Israeli extremists.

King congratulates Tunisian president

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday sent a cable to Zine Al Abidine Ibn Ali congratulating him on being elected president of Tunisia in last week's elections.

The King wished Ibn Ali success in leading the Tunisian people towards more progress and prosperity.

Tunisian voters elected the 54-year-old Ibn Ali as the second president of Tunisia in last Sunday's elections.

Ibn Ali, the only candidate, was elected to a five-year term, 18 months after seizing power in a bloodless coup.

Qasem receives ACC endorsement papers

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign

Minister Marwan Al Qasem Saturday received from the Egyptian and North Yemeni ambassadors to Jordan documents providing endorsement of the Egyptian and North Yemeni governments of the establishment of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC), which was proclaimed in Bagh

dad Feb. 16. Under an agreement by the four ACC countries — Jordan and Iraq in addition to North Yemen and Egypt — the four governments will deposit documents of endorsement of the ACC proclamation at the Foreign Ministry of Amman where the ACC permanent headquarters will be established.

General strike, mass curfews herald 17th month of uprising

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip launched a two-day general strike Saturday to commemorate the death of their war hero and mark the start of the 17th month of uprising against Israeli occupation.

Throughout the occupied territories, shops were shuttered and transportation came to a stand. Streets in the villages and cities were dominated by hundreds of protesters who raised Palestinian flags and built improvised barricades.

The Israeli army clamped or extended curfews on most of the Gaza Strip refugee camps, forcing at least 215,000 Arabs — about one-third of the total Gaza population — to stay inside their houses.

In Rafah and Khan Yunis refugee camps, protesters violated curfews and clashed with Israeli army troops, reports said.

Reports said soldiers in the West Bank town of Jenin shot and wounded three Palestinian teenagers. One of them, Maher Najeer Shalbak, 14, was taken to hospital in serious condition with a head wound.

Palestinian sources said soldiers shot a 14-year-old during stone-throwing demonstrations in Bethlehem.

Protesters also clashed with troops in the Gaza Strip at Khan Younis and Rafah, near the Egyptian border. Hospitals said a 13-year-old and a 17-year-old were wounded by army fire in Khan Younis and a 19-year-old was shot in Rafah.

Palestinians said the two-day strike to mark the start of the 17th month of the uprising was being widely observed on its first day, which coincided with the



Israeli troops prevent a demonstration in the occupied West Bank, second day of Ramadan.

At least 422 Palestinians have been killed since the revolt erupted Dec. 9, 1987.

Several violent confrontations were reported Saturday in the occupied West Bank.

In Tulkarem, troops forced residents to paint over nationalist slogans on house walls and remove Palestinian flags from rooftops and electricity poles, report said.

An Israeli photographer said hundreds of Palestinians blocked entrances to Halhoul and Beit Umar, erecting barricades and waving Palestinian flags. "The army dispersed them within two minutes," he said.

The general strike Saturday

and Sunday was called by the United National Leadership of the Uprising to mark an anniversary of the death of Abdul-Qader Husseini, a member of a prominent Jerusalem family and a Palestinian war hero.

Husseini, who commanded fighters in the Jerusalem area, was killed in the battle for the Qastel Hill in April 1948.

A leaflet distributed by the Muslim fundamentalist Hamas movement urged Palestinians to welcome Ramadan by escalating their uprising.

On Friday, thousands of Palestinians marked the first day of Ramadan with protests outside Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

After midday prayers attended by about 25,000 worshippers.

At least five policemen, three Arabs and several journalists were hurt in the stone-throwing protest. At least 37 Arabs were arrested.

The Islamic Jihad group distributed leaflets in the Gaza Strip calling on Druze Arabs serving in the paramilitary border police to quit and join the Palestinian revolt.

Many Israeli Druze serve in the border police.

Gaza residents said the Jihad leaflet was the group's first direct appeal to Israelis. They quoted it as telling the Druze that Israel was "trying to use you for the dirtiest missions."

60 feared killed in Soviet sub fire

MOSCOW (R) — Thousands of demonstrators shouting nationalist demands.

But unlike Friday's protest, tanks and other armoured vehicles made only a token appearance in the city centre. The few policemen in attendance made no attempt to intervene.

"The tanks moved about the embankment early in the morning, but now they're standing idle some distance from the city centre," the journalist said. "There are no armoured vehicles now near the meeting."

One eyewitness said the tanks pulled away after demonstrators had poured onto the city's main thoroughfare, Rustaveli Prospekt, to block their way.

Some demonstrators at the gathering have called for the secession of Georgia from the Soviet Union.

Others have urged the complete integration into the Transcaucasian Republic of Abkhazia, an autonomous area on the Black

Thousands demonstrate in Tbilisi

Sea coast. Demands by Abkhazians to secede from Georgia and create their own republic have sparked tension throughout the region in recent weeks.

Georgians fiercely oppose the demands of the Abkhazians, who constitute a minority even in their own region.

The Georgian Communist Party leadership has also denounced the demands and this week dismissed the party chief in Abkhazia, Boris Adleyba, who backed demands for secession.

One Georgian group has organised a demonstration Sunday for the Abkhaz town of Gagra, with up to 5,000 demonstrators expected to be brought in by bus from other parts of Georgia.

Residents in the picturesque town fear clashes and several Georgian schools and kindergartens have been closed after receiving anonymous threats.

Walesa urges opposition to contest polls

WARSAW (R) — Solidarity leader Lech Walesa called on the opposition Saturday to build on a "beautiful victory" in talks with communist leaders by running in Poland's first free elections in 40 years.

Walesa asked the citizens' committee of 150 union activists and opposition members to map out a strategy for the June polls which, under a deal with the government, will give them the right to enter parliament.

Walesa urged the citizens' committee, of which he is the chairman, to organise the election campaign and said the Solidarity-led opposition should make the most of its opportunity in the vote.

"I thank you for this beautiful political and propaganda vic-

tor," Walesa told the committee, which held its meeting in a Warsaw church building.

"I'd like to ask you to try to take advantage of this victory so that we decide together how to enter the open fields of democracy and freedom," he said.

The reforms begin as of

dismantling the Communist Party's power monopoly and putting Poland on the road to parliamentary democracy.

Other measures include the creation of a state presidency and easier rules on the formation of clubs and associations.

Walesa asked the citizens' committee, of which he is the chairman, to organise the election campaign and said the Solidarity-led opposition should make the most of its opportunity in the vote.

"It would be very bad if we



Shelling defies Beirut truce

BEIRUT (R) — The shattered city of Beirut was relatively calm Saturday apart from occasional shelling but few residents pinned hopes for long-term peace on a tenuous three-day-old ceasefire.

"Ceasefires are old jokes in Lebanon. There have been hundreds of them already but the war has continued for the past 14 years," said Rima Haddad, a resident of east Beirut.

People in the Christian heartland closed their businesses early after a few shells slammed into Beirut port and the coastal highway linking the eastern sector of the divided capital to the north.

There were no reports of casualties.

Traffic was light, with drivers fearful that artillery duels would

resume across the "green line" divide without warning.

Some people took advantage of the truce called by Arab League mediators to sandbag their homes or stockpile food.

Tens of thousands have fled their homes in both east and west Beirut for relatively safer areas after 24 days of bombardments, some of the worst since the civil war started in 1975.

Thousands of families left west Beirut for villages in South Lebanon, while many rich families sailed to Cyprus or other European countries.

Arab League mediators are trying to end the constitutional impasse which left Lebanon with no president, two governments, a toothless parliament and an army split on sectarian lines.

Politicians said the ceasefire would hold only if Aoun, who commands 15,000 mainly Christian troops, ended his blockade of the illegal ports, lifelines for the rival militias.

France, which governed both

Lebanon and Syria between the world wars, is sending a hospital ship and an oil tanker carrying relief supplies to Beirut. Aoun has said he hopes for military aid from Paris.

French President Francois Mitterrand said Thursday the lives of Christians were being threatened.

But Lebanese Socialist leader Walid Junblatt told France Saturday to keep out of his country's politics, saying political or military intervention would put 15 million Christians in the Middle East at risk (see page 2).

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France, which governed both

tives as the official parliamentary opposition in general elections due to be held by September.

The party, launched under the slogan "Getting Together in the 178-member white chamber of parliament, three seats fewer than the Conservatives who outstripped the Progressives in May 1987 elections.

But it has yet to choose a leader, it is now headed jointly by Progressives' leader Zach de Beer, Denis Worrall of the Independents and Wynand Malan of the National Democratic Movement.

But major questions remained unresolved as the new party hastily took shape, with the aim of ousting the far-right Conserva-

ment.

Many party members expressed fears that a combined leadership could spell electoral disaster and they pressed for a party congress to be held soon to elect a single leader.

De Beer told the congress the DP would build bridges to the black population. "We are mainly white because South Africa's history determined it. We now commit ourselves to changing this."

But the party's relations with major black anti-apartheid organisations have already shown

signs of strain.

One problem is DP participation in the segregated chambers of parliament reserved for coloured (mixed-race) and Indian members. The DP has two members in the Indians' chamber.

The United Democratic Front (UDF), a coalition of mainly black anti-apartheid groups, has boycotted the Indian and coloured houses as sham reforms.

"It is our duty to point out that participation in the tricameral parliament is totally unacceptable," the UDF said in a statement

Middle East News

Junblatt warns France to keep out of Lebanon

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Lebanese Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) leader Walid Junblatt told France Saturday to keep out of Lebanon's politics or face unpredictable consequences.

Addressing a news conference in Damascus, he warned that French political or military intervention would put at risk 15 million Christians in the Middle East.

"What is happening in Lebanon is an internal conflict which requires political reform and the overthrow of the military... we warn France not to be dragged into a political and military adventure in Lebanon," Junblatt said.

France, which ruled Syria and Lebanon under a League of Nations mandate between the two world wars, has sent two ships with medicines, food and oil to Lebanon as humanitarian aid for civilians after fierce artillery bombardments.

A French envoy visited Beirut this week to back up an Arab League ceasefire call and assess Lebanon's aid needs.

Syrian troops and their allies and forces loyal to army chief Michel Aoun generally adhered to the three-day-old Arab League ceasefire Saturday.

More than 150 people were killed and over 560 wounded in more than three weeks of artillery battles which devastated Beirut in some of the bitterest fighting in Lebanon's 14-year civil war.

Junblatt accused France of sup-

porting Aoun, who heads an interim military administration vying for power with a civilian cabinet.

"French political or military intervention, God forbid, would complicate the situation in Lebanon and endanger more than 15 million Christians living in the Middle East... it would mean a disaster for the whole region... it would be a very risky game," he said.

Junblatt dismissed a call by Major-General Aoun for a dialogue with rival forces, saying that the army chief was not sincere.

"We as national forces want dialogue with Christian democratic forces, but we could never have dialogue with those who were behind the disaster (of the last three weeks), namely Aoun and his clique. This is impossible. This clique should be overthrown," he said.

Syria has also demanded Aoun's resignation. He was named to run an interim government by outgoing President Amine Gemayel after parliament failed to elect a new head of state.

The artillery battles erupted March 14 after Aoun sought to impose his control outside the Christian enclave by blockading illegal ports which supplied Lebanon's militias with much of their funds.

"We welcome the commitment that General Aoun made," said the State Department. "We applaud his recognition that all Lebanon has the right to security, liberty, and dignity."

Richard Boucher, a State Department spokesman, said Aoun's call is "another step down the road" to a settlement in Leba-

nese politics," Junblatt said.

U.S. welcomes Aoun call

The United States Friday praised a call by Aoun for political reform, saying it would open the way to resolving some of the fundamental problems tearing Lebanon apart.

The comments appeared to indicate a State Department tilt towards the Aoun regime.

It was the first time in the latest round of artillery duels that the State Department has departed from its language of neutrality.

Aoun Thursday called for a conference between the warring sides to discuss power-sharing between Christians and Muslims.

"We have achieved equality in humiliation for 14 years," Aoun said. "We have to acquire equality today in responsibility, liberation, dignity and partnership."

"We have to be partners in making out destiny, because this partnership alone is bound to realise justice, equality and equal opportunities in a full national sense," he said.

Aoun said the Lebanese will have to pay much more dearly if they delay in achieving unity, security, dignity, stability and reconstruction of their homeland.

"We welcome the commitment that General Aoun made," said the State Department. "We applaud his recognition that all Lebanon has the right to security, liberty, and dignity."

non. But he conceded that "I can't say that we can be optimistic about the situation. I think this shows a path to resolving some of the fundamental problems that are there, and that's why we are supporting it."

Boucher said the United States does not have "any precise for-

mula that we're trying to impose now." The important thing is for the sides to stop fighting and start talking, he said.

Boucher reiterated repeated State Department calls of recent weeks for all sides, "foreign and domestic," to respect the ceasefire mediated by the Arab League.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Moscow: Shamir plan unworkable

LONDON (R) — Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Gennady Gerasimov said Saturday that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's plan for Palestinian elections in the occupied West Bank and Gaza was unworkable. "It's a stillborn child, a stillborn idea," Gerasimov said on Britain's Channel Four television. "It cannot work because you cannot really solve the Palestinian problem without the PLO." Shamir unveiled his election plan Thursday, in talks with President Bush in Washington, as a way to select a Palestinian delegation to negotiate an interim-period-of-self-government in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Gerasimov, in Britain after a visit by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, said Palestinians could only view the election proposal as "a recipe for quibbling." He also said Jewish settlement of the occupied territories was a timebomb.

Libya rejects criticism over bombers

NICOSIA (R) — Libya has rejected foreign criticism over its purchase of Soviet bombers, saying colonialist forces were spreading lies. A political commentary distributed by the official news agency JANA said that "Libya warns against any attempted aggression and will confront it with determination and resoluteness. It also reserves its right to self-defence." The agency did not comment explicitly on East-West arguments over the past few days whether Libya has acquired bombers that could attack Israel. The Soviet Union says it sent kits to build six bombers with a top range of 500 kilometres. The United States says Libya is getting up to 15 SU-24D jets which, even without mid-air refuelling, could reach Israel 1,100 kilometres away. Friday's JANA commentary said a campaign of lies was being mounted on the pretext that Libya had acquired sophisticated weapons. It said Libya was eager for peace but "will not give in to threats from any power."

Israeli women clash in Jerusalem

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Ultra-orthodox women punched and bit members of a progressive women's prayer group at Jerusalem's western wall Friday, a member of the group said. She said five women were injured in the assault, the second attack in two days on women's groups at the wall. Ultra-orthodox Jews oppose the women's prayer groups because they consider the sound of a woman's singing voice seductive. They also say they go against Jewish tradition that men and women pray separately and individually. Barbara Wachs, who led the Friday prayers, said at least four ultra-orthodox women attacked her group of 11, which included women from all streams of Judaism. "I was pulling her (an attacker) off one of the women and she turned around and hit me in the eye," Wachs said. The five injured women filed complaints saying policemen had watched the attacks but did nothing to stop them. After the incident, police arrested two of the attackers.

Palestinians reject Shamir's election call as stalling tactic

By Nicolas B. Tatro
The Associated Press

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM

Palestinians have made clear that a U.S.-backed Israeli call for elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip would not stop the uprising against Israeli occupation.

Demonstrations in Jerusalem and the West Bank followed hard on the heels of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's meeting with U.S. President George Bush Thursday. The protests signalled that Palestinians here believe the U.S. pledge to work on the election idea was inadequate.

Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat, speaking in the Congo, attacked Shamir's proposal as "inappropriate, as usual" and vowed the uprising would continue "until victory."

Some influential Palestinians in the occupied territories indicated elections might be possible if certain conditions were met, such as U.N. supervision and a withdrawal of Israeli troops. Their comments appeared to give the U.S. government some leeway to explore the idea.

"The PLO doesn't even have to openly agree to the idea. The PLO just has to let the process start. We just need an atmosphere that will let things take off," said an Israeli official who demanded anonymity.

Shamir's plan is to hold elections in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip to choose Palestinian representatives to talk with Israel about establishing "autonomy" as an interim arrangement.

There was no sign of a setup in the 16-month-old intifada.

In Jerusalem, for example,

several thousand Palestinians clashed with police, burning an Israeli flag and shouting "Islamic and Arab Palestine" outside the Al Aqsa Mosque, one of Islam's holiest sites.

"I think the intifada (uprising) will continue until Shamir comes up with a better proposal," said Haima Siniora, editor of the daily Al Fajr newspaper.

An Israeli official who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity said Shamir's proposal to President Bush did not link elections to the return of claim to the West Bank and Gaza.

The official said Israel hoped that international reaction would be favourable to the election idea. "If international public opinion accepts, I think the Palestinians would not have an easy time rejecting it," he said.

The liberal daily Haaretz and the conservative Maariv newspapers concurred Shamir had only won a "time out." Haaretz said "The impression is that the Bush administration is not going to let Shamir off the hook soon."

Finance Minister Shimon Peres, head of the Labour Party and Shamir's rival in the coalition government, expressed some scepticism about Shamir's plan. "I still (don't see) a second side for negotiations, and the question is whether we can find Palestinian representatives," he was quoted as saying by the Itim news agency.

Alex Bligh, Shamir's Arab affairs adviser, said on Israel's Arabic TV that Shamir and the Palestinians would engage in a tug-of-war to see who would make the least "concessions" and that initial rejections were to be expected.

"In the coming weeks... we will see attempts by all sides to give the least and get the most. Perhaps by the end of spring or the beginning of summer, it will be possible to get from everyone enough centimetres of movement to start the process," he said.

Rebels report large anti-Khomeini demonstrations, protests, clashes

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Iranian opposition group, Mujahideen-e-Khalq, has reported "extensive demonstrations and clashes" between people and Iranian Revolutionary Guards in the cities of Najaf-Abad, Yazdanshahr, Amir-Abad and the town of Eman in central Iran.

"Protest demonstrations in Najaf-Abad, the hometown of (Iranian revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah) Khomeini's deposed successor, Hosseini-Ali Montazeri, which began as scattered clashes in different parts of the city Sunday, April 2, reached a peak on April 4 and 5, as local residents joined the protest en masse," according to a Mujahideen statement telecast to the Jordan Times late Friday.

"Clashes broke out throughout the city Tuesday morning and the Khomeini regime brought in 5000 guards from the Isfahan Guards Corps to confront the people," it said. As clashes continued, protesters disarmed some of the guards and returned the guards' fire. They chanted "Down with Khomeini" and set fire to the guards corps HQ, the governor's office and the office of Mullah Izadi, the Friday prayers leader."

According to the statement, Tuesday evening, the guards raided people's homes, making hundreds of arrests. "Despite the protests of nurses and medical staff in Issa Ben Maryam and Kashan Hospitals, the wounded were forcefully taken away by the guards," it added.

In Najaf-Abad, a night curfew has been imposed and checkpoints have been set up at all entrances into the city. Any movement to or from the city is strictly controlled, it added.

Clashes also broke out in Yazdanshahr, Amir-Abad and the town of Eman, which lie near Isfahan and Najaf-Abad, according to the statement, which quoted local reports.

A report prepared by the guards corps command blamed the Mujahideen for starting and spreading the clashes and added that Montazeri's issue was only a pretext, particularly as pleases by Mullah Dorri-Najafabadi, Montazeri's representative, calling for an end to demonstrations and clashes, went unheeded by the people, it concluded.

Executions

In another statement, the Mujahideen said the Khomeini regime has been executing political prisoners and identifying the victims as drug traffickers for the past few months. In Tehran alone, many cases have been reported, it said. Four Mujahideen political prisoners, including a physician, were hanged in Sadeghchi Square in January. In February, seven political prisoners were hanged at Molavi junction, five in Firooz Square, three in Hashemchi Square and one in Hashemchi Square. All were supporters of the Mujahideen, the statement said.

Rushdie sentence will be carried out — Khamenei

NICOSIA (AP) — Iranian President Ali Khamenei Saturday told Iran's ambassadors to the 12 European Community (EC) nations that a death sentence against British novelist Salman Rushdie would be carried out, state-run Tehran Radio reported.

The broadcast, monitored in Nicosa, quoted him as saying that Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's "fatwa (religious decree) against the apostate writer... is a decree based on Sharia, and is irrevocable."

"Without any equivocation he (Rushdie) is sentenced to death, because he has insulted the be-

iefs of more than one billion Muslims worldwide," Khamenei said.

Khamenei ordered Feb. 14 that Rushdie be sought out and killed for defaming Islam in his novel "The Satanic Verses."

Fourteen Western nations including Britain and its EC partners recalled their ambassadors from Tehran to protest the decree.

Iran called back its envoys from community countries in retaliation and later severed ties with Britain, accusing Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of conspiring against Islam.

Ali Khamenei

The European Community nations later agreed that each country would decide of its own accord on returning their envoys to Tehran.

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

69:45 Cairo (MS)
17:45 Paris (RJ)
17:10 London (RJ)
17:30 ... New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:45 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
17:55 Brussels, Frankfurt (RJ)
19:20 Helsinki, Ankara (RJ)
20:45 ... Rome (AZ)
22:45 ... Tripoli (LN)
23:00 ... Dubai (EK)
19:25 ... Sanaa (LH)
20:25 ... Athens (OA)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

09:35 ... Cairo (MS)
16:20 ... Kuwait (KU)
16:40 ... Damascus (AZ)
13:45 ... Kuwait (KU)
15:15 ... Dubai (EK)
18:25 ... Frankfurt (LH)
21:45 ... Athens (OA)
06:05 ... London, Cairo (BA)

Market Prices

Upper/lower price is *per kg.*
Almond ... 440 / 400
Apple ... 500 / 400
Banana ... 350 / 300
Banana (Makassar) ... 300 / 250
Carrot ... 320 / 240
Broad beans ... 170 / 140
Cabbage ... 80 / 50
Carrot ... 140 / 120
Cauliflower ... 200 / 160
Cucumber ... 400 / 300
Dates ... 580 / 500
Eggplant ... 300 / 260
Garlic ... 250 / 180
Lemon ... 450 / 400
Lettuce (per one) ... 90 / 60
Marrow (large) ... 100 / 60
Marrow (small) ... 150 / 100
Orange (Shamshur) ... 450 / 400
Orange (local) ... 380 / 340
Onion (dry) ... 200 / 150
Onion (green) ... 150 / 120
Pepper (red) ... 540 / 480
Pepper (sweet) ... 200 / 160
Potato ... 220 / 180
Spinach ... 160 / 120
Strawberry ... 1400 / 1000
Tomatoes ... 400 / 300

Market Prices

Cairo (RJ) ... 100 / 80
Kuwait (KU) ... 100 / 80
London (RJ) ... 100 / 80
Paris (RJ) ... 100 / 80
Rome (AZ) ... 100 / 80
Sanaa (LH) ... 100 / 80
Tripoli (LN) ... 100 / 80
Athens (OA) ... 100 / 80
Beirut (RJ) ... 100 / 80

Departures

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:55 ... Agaba (RJ)
07:45 (RJ)
11:30 ... Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
12:30 (RJ)
13:45 (RJ)
15:45 (RJ)
16:45 (RJ)
17:45 (RJ)
21:00 (RJ)
22:00 (RJ)

Arrivals

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

09:15 (RJ)
09:30 (RJ)
09:45 ... Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
09:55 ... Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
10:00 (RJ)
12:00 (RJ)
14:00 (RJ)
14:15 (RJ)
14:30 (RJ)
14:45 (RJ)
15:00 (RJ)
15:15 (RJ)
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16:00 (RJ)
16:15 (RJ)
16:30 (RJ)
16:45 (RJ)

For the Traveller

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

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Hospitals

AMMAN: Hussein Medical Centre ... 81381/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Ann ... 6442/16
Akhil Maternity, J. Ann ... 6624/12
Jabal Amman Maternity ... 642/362
Mahra J. Ann ... 660/144
Palestine, Shunessat ... 669/131
Shunessat Hospital ... 649/845
Al-Mashar Hospital ... 6672/19
The Islamic, Abdali ... 661/

National News



Lawzi receives French envoy

Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament Ahmad Al Lawzi received in his office Saturday French Ambassador in Amman Patrick Leclercq. Leclercq, whose tour of duty here has now ended,

discussed with Lawzi general topics related to relations between France and Jordan (Petra photo).

NHF workshop prepares for opening of Jubilee School

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) Saturday opened a week-long workshop on new trends in curriculum development and instructions in chemistry, in preparation for the opening of the Jubilee School.

A total of 21 specialists, educationalists, and high calibre teachers from various educational institutions are taking part in the workshop activities which are being held in cooperation with the British Council and Moray House College of Education in Edinburgh, Scotland.

Participants attending the workshop represent the Ministry of Education, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine refugees (UNRWA), the University of Jordan, community colleges, the Armed Forces Cultural Department and a number of Jordanian schools.

The participants will discuss and learn about new directives in matters related to problem-solving abilities such as selecting information, interpreting graphs, drawing up conclusions, explaining, predicting and generalising.

They will consider available material dealing with science and technology in the society, and try out techniques used to develop and assess practical skills.

The participants will be oriented on the most up-to-date trends in developing curricula and designing courses for teaching chemistry and sciences.

The Jubilee School is a model secondary school for gifted students and is being established by the NHF in honour of His Majesty King Hussein's deep commitment to education and in recognition of the great strides made under his leadership.

The school will provide outstanding students from Jordan and other Arab countries with the highest quality education.

As a model school, it will contribute to the development of education throughout the region.

The Jubilee School, the establishment of which was announced during the King's 50th birthday in 1985, will offer extensive educational opportunities and allow for concentrated study.

It is also expected to provide instruction and activities aimed to encourage self-reliance, high motivation, personal responsibility, skills of investigation, problem solving, creativity and independent thinking.

Two workshops were held in the summer of 1988 also in preparation for the Jubilee School which will be built on a 120 dunums of land.

The school will include laboratories, libraries, workshops, dormitories, playgrounds, an indoor swimming pool, restaurants and residential quarters for the staff.

The projected JD 4 million school is expected to be ready before the 1990-1991 scholastic year.

AMMAN (Petra, J.T.) — The Greater Amman Municipality has organised special evening programmes to be carried out throughout the bimonthly month of Ramadan.

A municipality spokesman said that the programme, which was prepared in cooperation with the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, entails evening prayers at the Hasheebieh Square near the Roman Amphitheatre, downtown Amman, and lectures and seminars on religious topics.

The spokesman said that the programme is being carried out on Sundays and Thursdays each week and noted that Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Aziz Al Khayyat will be among the speakers.

In keeping with a tradition during the past months of Ramadan, the municipality has opened a Ramadan Souq, an open air market place, which is normally opened in the evening, to allow shoppers to buy a wide range of products at reduced prices.

Upon signing the agreement,

Cultural programme ends at Karak Castle

KARAK (Petra, J.T.) — A week-long cultural programme ended at the ancient castle of Karak in southern Jordan Saturday.

The programme which was organised by the Department of Libraries, Documentations and National Archives included book exhibitions, poetry recitals, and a display of historic documents.



The Ma'in Spa complex

Ma'in Spa overcomes communication problem

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ma'in Spa complex which was formally opened last year has overcome the problem of telephone communications, a step that paved the way for a noticeable increase in the number of visitors since the beginning of 1989, according to Mr. Michael Nazzal the complex director.

He said in a statement carried by the Al Dustour daily that special rates for Jordanian families have been introduced lately in view of the current economic situation, designed to encourage domestic tourism.

In addition, Nazzal noted, a foreign tourist coming to Jordan

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

MORE MINERALS PRODUCED: Jordan last year produced 18 per cent more minerals than it did in the previous year, altogether worth JD 276 million compared to JD 234 million produced in 1987, according to an official from the Natural Resources Authority (NRA). The official said that Jordan's production included phosphate, fertilisers, cement and potash, most of which was exported to other countries (Petra).

IRAQI MILITARY TEAM IN AMMAN: A visiting Iraqi military delegation led by Lt.-Gen. Iyad Faith Al Rawi Saturday called at the Armed Forces Headquarters and was briefed on the development of the Jordanian Armed Forces and their training programmes. The delegation, which arrived in Amman last Thursday on a several day visit, will tour different military positions and archaeological sites in the Kingdom (Petra).

GREEN BELT AROUND MAFRAQ: Mafrag Municipality has prepared designs to set up a green belt around the city. It said that the belt of 30 kilometres in length and 100 metres in width is designed to protect the environment. The green belt, which is being supported by the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment, entails planting thousands of trees (Petra).

NMC BEGINS THIRD TERM: The National Music Conservatory (NMC) Saturday commenced its third term of the current school year with the attendance of 162 students. The students are taking instructions on playing various musical instruments by 22 high calibre instructors. All public and private schools are currently closed for the spring holiday which ends Saturday 15, 1989 (Petra).

JUST CLUB OPENS: President of the University of Science and Technology (JUST) Kamel Ajlouni Saturday opened the University Staff Club, which was established with the aim of bolstering cultural, social, sport and technical relations and enhancing the university's relations with the local community. Also Saturday the university received 50 Italian beeches which will be put in the gardens located in the university campus (Petra).

ART EXHIBITIONS: Yarmouk University President Mohammad Hamdan Saturday opened a four-day plastic art exhibition by Mousa Ijawi. Hamdan also inaugurated another art exhibition by the artist Abdo Kashout from the University of Fine Arts Department (Petra).

AID DISTRIBUTED IN TAFILEH: The National Fund last year gave JD 128,664 as recurrent aid to some 570 families in Tafileh Governorate and JD 1,237 to 75 foster families in the governorate (Petra).

QATARNEH INSPECTS GOVERNORATE: Zarqa Governor Eid Qatarneh Saturday paid an inspection tour to some neighbourhoods in Zarqa, Russafa and the Hittin camp, in the eastern outskirts of Amman, and inspected the progress of work in the water and sewerage project and the road asphalt paving project in the camp (Petra).

JD 462,000 FOR ZARQA ROADS: Ministry of Public Works has allocated JD 462,000 for the construction and maintenance of roads in Zarqa Governorate (Petra).

AOAS to take part in Montreal conference

AMMAN (Petra) — The Amman-based Arab Organisation for Administrative Sciences (AOAS) will take part in an annual international conference due to open in Montreal, Canada, Wednesday.

An organisation spokesman said that the week-long conference, which is organised by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) will look into developing the ILO's international information network by transforming it into an international association to be based in Geneva.

Zakat Fund spends JD 902,793 in 1988

AMMAN (Petra) — The Zakat Fund spent an amount of JD 902,793 last year, in the form of recurrent aid to needy families in Jordan, in addition to an assistance of JD 466,520 to West Bank students, attending the Jordanian universities, Zakat Fund Director General Sheikh Mohammad Shakra said Saturday.

At a press conference held at the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Saturday, Sheikh Shakra pointed out that the Fund last year allocated JD 1,178,283 to the families of the martyrs in the occupied West Bank in addition to an allocation of JD 466,520 for students from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, who, as a result of the uprising, lost their funding sources in the occupied territories.

Shakra also said that the Fund granted JD 31,550 to 260 needy families in the form of regular monthly assistance, in addition to emergency cash assistance totalling JD 23,302 to 300 persons and JD 4,475 as cash assistance to 200 students from Jordan.

On the Fund's assistance to the West Bank, Shakra pointed out that some 875 students from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip benefitted from the Fund's assistance last year.

The Fund also paid JD 220,850 in aid to 306 families in the occupied territories, in addition to JD 100,000 for setting up homes for the aged and the poor, in addition to JD 100,000 for setting up income generating projects for the poor and JD 60,000 for a bee-breeding project.

He added that the Fund retains only 10 per cent of the amount to be paid to other beneficiaries.

On the Fund's future plans,

Shakra said it will allocate JD 100,000 for education, JD 200,000 for setting up homes for the aged and the poor, in addition to JD 100,000 for setting up

income generating projects for the poor and JD 60,000 for a bee-breeding project.

He noted that emergency assistance is given to some needy people as a lump sum payable once in accordance with the conditions set by the donors.

However, Shakra noted any donor has the right, in accordance with the Zakat Law, to name the beneficiary or beneficiaries to benefit from his alms and the Zakat Fund should respect his conditions by giving the sum donated to the person or persons mentioned by name.

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Moment of truth

THE MOMENT of truth about the outcome of President George Bush's encounters with leaders of the countries most directly affected by the Arab-Israeli conflict would only come when His Majesty King Hussein also gets his turn with the American president and his senior aides in the White House and Washington on April 19. The picture emerging thus far in the wake of President Bush's meetings with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir is blurry at this stage of the game. The Arab World would have to suspend final judgment about what has really transpired in Washington lately until His Majesty King Hussein concludes his talks there and reports to the Arab Nation on the results of his meetings with the American officials.

It was not fortuitous, one still hopes, when President George Bush presented his blueprint for peace in the Middle East, at the end of his talks with President Mubarak, in such a way as to begin with a call for an end to Israeli occupation of Arab territories, and end with the convening of a properly structured international conference; with granting the Palestinians their full political rights serving as a central point. As long as these propositions remain the cardinal features of American policy towards the Arab-Israeli conflict, then the Arab side would have a good cause for optimism. Any deviation from these fundamental principles, or any attempt to dilute their potency by accepting diversionary recipes, should be rejected outright. King Hussein's forthcoming visit to Washington would therefore serve as the litmus paper which will gauge fully and completely the American scene as far as the Middle East is concerned. Such a trip would also write the third chapter about Washington's story on the Middle East and would probably address, inter alia, the question of how to reconcile the apparent American acceptance of the Israeli offer to conduct elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip with the three cardinal principles duly formulated and accepted by President Bush, namely, the end of Israeli occupation of Arab territories, acceptance of the political rights of the Palestinians and the convening of an international conference on the Middle East. At the end the question remains, is the concept of elections going to be simply a decoy for procrastinating and derailing these very salient features about ultimate peace between the two sides in the Arab-Israeli conflict, and for frustrating the PLO's role in the projected international conference?

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i daily newspaper Saturday tackled the American administration's handling of the Middle East situation, criticising it for supporting Israel's determination not to talk to the PLO, not to endorse the projected international conference and not to accept the Palestinian state. The paper said that the Bush administration furthermore backed Israel's idea of implementing the Camp David accord in stages. The paper expressed astonishment at the Bush administration's behaviour and said that while U.S. Secretary of State James Baker advised Israel to talk to the PLO, we see the Bush administration backing Shamir's idea of rejecting any meetings with the PLO and supporting Israel's call for elections in the occupied lands. The paper said that Bush has tried to show that Washington was not adamant in its position with regard to the conference, but at the same time shelved any thinking about this question until the "proper time," as he called it. This strange behaviour on the part of the U.S. administration, the paper noted, is bound to cast doubts on the American credibility. It added that such position can only point to the fact that Washington continues to stick to its views and wants a solution to come through its own efforts and in agreement with Israel with the total exclusion of the Europeans and other parties.

Writing in Al Ra'i's daily, columnist Tareq Masarweh also tackles Washington's stand vis à vis the Palestine question and asks why should elections be held in the occupied territories. The writer wonders why Washington wants to create substitutes for the PLO leadership at a time when its own representatives are currently holding a dialogue with the legitimate representatives of the Palestinian people in Tunis. What could the Palestinians negotiate with Israel about while they are under occupation and what would they gain if they stopped the intifada, the writer asks. He says that Israel ought to end its occupation of the Arab territories first and then invite the Palestinians for negotiations in the presence of U.N. Security Council members and other concerned parties in the Arab-Israeli conflict. The writer says that by presenting the "elections" question to the U.S. administration, the Israelis are clearly telling the world that they refuse to implement Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, and so they refuse to have peace.

Al Dustour daily echoes a total rejection of Shamir's idea about elections to choose substitutes for the PLO leadership. Shamir's proposals, it said, have been totally and outrightly rejected inside and outside the occupied territories since they are nothing but a ploy to deceive the world. The paper said that Shamir who presented the elections proposal is careful to implement the Camp David agreement, and has gone to Washington with only this idea on his mind. Shamir has totally ignored the question of peace and the implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, and the prospect of an international conference to achieve that end.

Sawt Al Shabab daily newspaper said that Shamir tried to show the world that he was keen on ending the Arab-Israeli conflict but failed to mention any idea of pulling out Israeli forces from the occupied lands. The paper said that the question of peace with the Arab states and the implementation of resolutions to achieve that goal were never contemplated by the Israeli premier; and all he was keen about is to present the proposal of elections to be held under the yoke of occupation. If the United States wants to go along with Shamir in his ideas about the elections without giving any thought of asking Israel to pull out from the occupied lands, the paper said, then it has chosen a path that can never bring peace closer to the region.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

The ability to adjust spurs optimism

PREVIOUSLY we used to talk of a "Red Line," beyond which external indebtedness becomes too heavy and unsafe. The people were always told that we were still within the safety boundaries, and that we did not reach, and have no intention of crossing, the red line. The red line however, was flexible and mobile. Starting with a suggested percentage of the value of exports of goods and services including remittances, until it exceeded the set line, we then conveniently changed the percentage rate upward and pushed the line forward, and thus we still remain within the safety limits.

Now it became obvious and beyond dispute that we have crossed the red line at least seven years ago, and found ourselves suddenly deep in an unsafe and dangerous territory. Unfortunately, we needed long time to acknowledge the bitter fact that the external indebtedness became a very heavy burden, far exceeding the capacity of the national economy to service, and that a major part of our capital expenditure represented a borrowed development that was hopelessly unable to pay back the capital and service the related debt, at least in the short run.

At this stage we have to reform and adjust the economy in a comprehensive manner, reducing financial deficit, removing

inefficiencies here and there, and putting the house in order, and the direction on the right course. We should not think for a moment that the measures taken to reform the economy, whether in accordance with IMF prescriptions or otherwise, are meant only to enable Jordan come up with the foreign exchange needed to pay back the foreign debt. The reforms are absolutely necessary as desired objectives by themselves, so that we can survive the crisis, and secure the minimum and basic requirements of both production and consumption.

I am of the opinion that the full repayment of due installments and interest is beyond our ability, even if the economy was actually reformed and adjusted properly. Repayment of debt needs a much larger economy, and a substantial growth. A surplus in the current account of the balance of payment is also needed to make repayment of debts in foreign currencies possible, but such surplus is not expected to happen overnight or in the few years to come.

Some calculations of financial ratios may be in order to demonstrate the above conclusion. If Jordan's indebtedness is within the range of \$6.5 to \$7 billion, we can assume that debt service needs between \$1.5 billion a year, of which half

represents interest and the other half represents installments on principal loans.

The above estimate makes between 30 to 50 per cent of the over all national income, or 200 per cent of the proceeds of commodity exports, or 40 to 65 per cent of the gross receipts of foreign exchange from all sources.

The settlement of this relatively huge burden is extremely difficult even at the best of circumstances; therefore, the process of restructuring the economy must be accompanied by a substantial relief of the indebtedness burden, the repayment of which is obviously beyond Jordan's capacity now and in the near future.

The business community is aware of the fact that the IMF team is optimistic about the future of the Jordanian economy. They rightly think that it is curable, that the crisis is controllable, and that the remedies are manageable. The major factor in this attitude is not the current situation as it stands, but the ability to change.

During the last six months, the government showed that it is in charge and able to make rather tough decisions. That is a very welcome start, but it is only the start of a long way we have to go.

French opposition in disarray

By Nicholas Kotch
Reuter

PARIS — Weakened by a string of electoral failures, the old guard running France's conservative opposition is in disarray following a challenge from a new generation of rising political stars.

Leaders of the RPR-UDF alliance were caught unprepared and confused by pressure for a wholesale rethink of their strategy.

The assault was led by Michel Noir, riding high since his election last month as mayor of Lyon, France's third city, and touted as a future presidential prospect.

Noir and his supporters seized the initiative last weekend when they showed scant respect for their elders, notably RPR president and former Prime Minister

Jacques Chirac.

"The French are tired of tactical games, squabbles between leaders and the problem of so-and-so's status."

"The French want a profound change," Noir told a key RPR gathering in the Riviera resort of Nice.

The applause left Chirac and his lieutenants shifting uncomfortably in their seats.

The old team, many in their 60s and former aides of the late President General Charles de Gaulle, founder of the RPR, have a lot to answer for in the eyes of the younger brigade.

So has ex-president Valery Giscard D'Estaing, the 63-year-old chief of the centrist UDF.

In the past 11 months the opposition has suffered three clear defeats at the polls against

France's Socialist-led government.

Chirac's bid for the presidency was easily overcome by incumbent Francois Mitterrand last May and the centre-right went on to lose control of parliament and concede substantial terrain in last month's municipal elections.

Several years of Socialist domination stretch ahead with both Mitterrand and his prime minister, Michel Rocard, facing well in opinion polls. No national elections are due until 1992.

The Noir camp made a strong pitch for all the places on the list of opposition candidates at the June 18 European elections to be chosen from the young "renovators" group.

"Young" in French political terms means the under-35s, political commentators say. Noir is in

fact a grandfather although at 44 one of the fittest and best-looking in France.

But the challenge to Chirac has not only come from moderates like Noir who hope to dislodge Mitterrand from the soft, consensual centre of French politics.

The threat also lies on the right in the powerful shape of Corsican Charles Pasqua, a former interior minister who thinks the RPR has lost its way.

"When you are in politics, you need convictions. Our problem is that we don't have enough people with convictions," Pasqua said at Nice, dismissing talk of full fusion between the RPR and the UDF.

"We will have trouble trying to occupy the ground on the centre-left. The Socialists are there already."

Taxing the intifada

By Michael S. Serrill

During the 16 months of the Palestinian uprising, or *intifada*, in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, world attention has focused on Israel's attempt to batter its Arab opponents into submission with bullets and beatings, arrests and mass detentions.

This is highway robbery," exclaimed a Palestinian named Iyad, 30, as he emerged from a tax office in the West Bank last week. Iyad needed a tax clearance card to renew his driver's licence. Israeli officials said he owed unpaid income taxes of \$600 for the previous ten months. Iyad insisted that he had been unemployed during the period.

obtain "tax clearance certificates" proving that they are up to date on their tax payments. The rule amounts to a form of harassment; the certificates are valid for one month and for one purpose only, so a Palestinian cannot use the same clearance, for example, to get a driver's licence and a birth certificate for a new baby.

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Palestinians need tax clearance for: Birth and death certificates Driver's licences Permission to buy and sell property Approval to travel

The underground unified leadership of the *intifada* has called for a boycott of the payment of Israeli levies. Those Arabs who support the campaign are pursued into their villages by Israeli tax collectors protected by gun-toting soldiers. The authorities sometimes clamp curfews on villages, then force all the residents whose names appear on the tax wanted list to pay up. Palestinians who refuse to pay will have their televisions, stereos and family valuables seized and held until they do. If motorists questioned at roadblocks cannot produce valid tax clearances, their cars are confiscated on the spot. If an owner reclaims a vehicle after settling his taxes, he still has to pay an additional \$8 a day in parking charges for the car.

Brigadier General Yishayahu Erez, head of the West Bank civil administration, defends the tough economic policies. "You have to bear in mind that we have to pay the 13,000 government employees working in the West Bank," he said. "Since we meet our obligations, we have to use force to make the West Bankers pay their taxes." Israel's critics say that if the oppressive system of taxes, fines and fees is designed to bring the Arabs to their knees, it is likely to backfire. The less the Palestinians have, goes the argument, the less they have to lose — Newsweek.

Mystery route of the U.S. economy

By Naseem Abdallah

WASHINGTON — A series of conflicting signals have again raised the key question about the American economy: is it robust and kicking or is it finally slowing down?

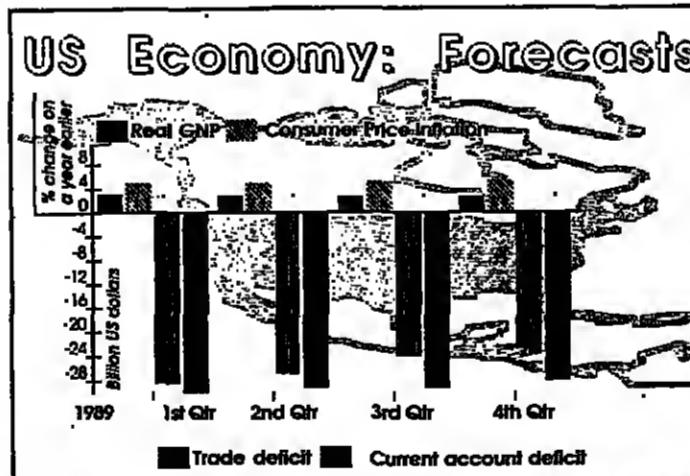
In recent weeks there have been, quite unbelievably, convincing indications of both events occurring. While the Labour Department has been reporting increases in new jobs, the private sector has been warning of slower economic activity. The National Association of Purchasing Management, quoting a survey, maintained that it had found "a sharp drop in the rate of economic growth" in the United States.

This was quite in contrast with Labour Department statistics which showed that jobs had increased considerably, 415,000 in January and 289,000 in February. "If the economy is slowing down then where are the jobs coming from?" demanded one economist.

"At the same time, if there are jobs in the market then how's that an indication of a stagnating economy?"

Qualified senior economists believe that when simplified, the situation, in the words of one expert, "makes no sense at all." Most gurus in the higher echelons of Wall Street have been careful enough not to make any sweeping predictions because "the signs" — either way — are too inexact. Investment consultants said the labour figures were good in the short-term for the U.S. dollar but had for the fight against inflation and, therefore, unwelcome.

"It's a silly thing to say, but nobody wants to hear about job increases while the fears of higher inflation remain real," said one economist.



Another question which has often been raised relates to the chronic budget and trade deficits. What will happen, it is being asked, if the U.S. dollar collapses under the consistent pressure of the two deficits? Again no-one has the answer.

There is an ongoing debate on the level of inflation that the United States could consider "safe" and the level at which the country should take action.

Since 1982, the United States has paid lip-service to its commitment to anti-inflationary measures and yet it hasn't suffered as a result. No-one knows. Meanwhile, inflation seems to be creeping up and keeping most investors and planners on tenterhooks.

In many economists' view the slowing of growth will have to be quick-paced enough to avoid the destabilising effect of a surge in inflation and perhaps a recession.

But how is that to be achieved in real life? No-one knows. Meanwhile, inflation seems to be creeping up and keeping most investors and planners on tenterhooks.

The Fed's policy on controlling inflation or, for that matter, its policy on credit squeeze remains unclear. But economists agree that the United States will be a more expensive place to live in during the coming months.

Furthermore, in the view of these experts, the United States will eventually be shedding jobs and losing out to competition in the marketplace in the near future. Those who disagree with that scenario point out that time alone may tell — Academic File.

manufacturers, helped keep American price increases below four per cent. U.S. factories operated at nearly record rates of capacity.

"But Ronald Reagan's luck seems not to have rubbed off on George Bush," said one commentator recently. "As he (Bush) was campaigning for president, commodity prices were rising and the weak dollar was reducing foreign competition, allowing domestic manufacturers to raise the prices of everything from plastics to shoes."

Most western economists believe the United States may already be headed into the lap of a self-perpetuating price-driven inflation. With labour costs rising at an annual rate of 6.8 per cent, the Federal Reserve Board seems in no mood to daily. The Fed has gradually tightened credit, allowing the federal funds rate or overnight bank loans to rise three percentage points since May. This experts believe, can only have a negative impact on growth.

The Fed's policy on controlling inflation or, for that matter, its policy on credit squeeze remains unclear. But economists agree that the United States will be a more expensive place to live in during the coming months.

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A matter of life and death

By Hamza Hendawi
Reuter

ABYEI, Sudan — Rain brings life and death to south Sudan.

If it fails to soon or too hard, the malnourished refugees who daily stagger into the southern town of Abyei will face starvation — their supply lines cut by floods.

If it comes too late, the crops planted in the parched dry fields in the hope of a good harvest will wither and die.

Thousands of people in Abyei, 800 kilometres southwest of the Sudanese capital Khartoum, are being fed by supplies from Al-Muglad to the northwest — a lifeline in which the United Nations has now joined and that should last until June when the rainy season sets in.

But there are signs that the May-October rains might be early this year, bringing with them a harvest of death.

Abyei had its first rain in late March, nearly six weeks early. Now the southerners can only watch the sky and pray this does not herald floods. Rain also fell far north as Khartoum in late March.

Flying out of Abyei, heavy, dark thunderclouds were seen on the horizon moving south.

Weathermen in Khartoum say there are signs that the rains will be heavy and start prematurely.

Abyei is inhabited by members of the southern majority Dinka Tribe. Dinkas provide the nucleus of the SPLA's estimated 40,000 guerrillas fighting to end what they see as domination over the animist and Christian south by the Muslim and Arabised north.

Army foxholes ring the town's dirt airstrip and troops routinely comb the surrounding bush in search of infiltrating rebels.

An average of 100 refugees arrive daily in Abyei, according to Omar Mohammed Al Lithi, the representative in Abyei of the government's Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC).

He said the RRC expected the town's refugee population to shoot up to 35,000 in the next few months. He said 36,000 out of 55,000 sacks of Sorghum needed to feed the refugees were already in place.

However, Ronald Pajmakers, a Dutchman who heads a team of relief workers belonging to the charity Médecins Sans Frontières, said the number of refugees in Abyei could swell beyond RRC estimates.

"There is another factor that is not being taken into account and



"At least 6,000 people died in Abyei between June and October last year from hunger and disease. They were among an estimated 250,000 southerners who perished in 1988."

that is the fact that nearly 25 per cent of the content of each sack of Sorghum which arrives in Abyei is missing through holes and inefficient handling," he said.

Malaria and diarrhoea were widespread among the refugees, who Pajmakers said drank from a seasonal river in which they bathed, washed and urinated.

Health packages Cuban style

By Gilles Trequier
Reuter

HAVANA — A Cuban treatment for skin disease is drawing thousands of patients to Havana, part of Cuba's plan to become a top medical centre for the developing world.

Already boasting one of the Third World's most advanced health systems, Cuba is exploring ways to use its medical expertise to earn hard currency amid the worst foreign exchange shortage since the 1959 revolution.

To help turn medical advances into monetary dividends, the government created Servimedex. The firm is a subsidiary of the Cubanacan holding company set up in 1987 to generate hard currency by developing the tourist sector and establishing joint ventures, a novelty in Cuba.

Primarily through "health tourism" packages, Servimedex is expected to earn \$30 million this year, a jump from about four million in 1988, said its director Dr. Ricardo Martinez Rojas.

"Some of our medical technology is very successful in developing countries, it was a matter of finding new outlets and also to respond to demand," he told reporters.

Among the interested potential foreign patients are those who suffer vitiligo, a disorder that creates smooth white patches of skin. It affects millions of people worldwide.

A Cuban doctor, Carlos Miyares Cao, pioneered the "melagelina" ointment to treat the depigmentation.

"People hear about our vitiligo treatment, they want to know more, they eventually visit us," Martinez said.

Made in Cuba

Miyares Cao began developing the treatment using melagelina — a placental extract in alcohol — in 1973 and began using it on a large scale in 1985. In 80 per cent of the cases, Miyares Cao told reporters in an interview, the treatment was successful.

He said a clinic in the Canary Islands offered vitiligo treatment with the "Made in Cuba" medicine. Contacts have been established abroad, and the ointment may eventually be manufactured

under licence in Britain, Canada, India and Italy.

About 110 patients per month from 70 countries come to his small, modern clinic in the residential Miramar district.

Servimedex packages that include room and board at a Havana hotel allow them to spend a minimum of a week for treatment — including computer analysis of how the cure is progressing and the vitiligo spots vanishing. The packages cost up to \$250.

Patients travel from as far away as Australia and India. One Indian diplomat said that in India, where most marriages are still arranged, misconceptions about vitiligo and the stigma it carries could cloud a young woman's marriage prospects.

Miyares Cao's best known patient, 35-year-old Sri Lankan-born Sarojini Ariyanayagam knows how it feels to be looked at like a freak."

A British resident, she came here in 1986 for three months and returned a year ago to stay until the end of the treatment.

Describing herself as a "test case," she has now recovered a spectacular 40 per cent from an 85 per cent depigmentation. Her photograph adorns Servimedex brochures and she works at the clinic in exchange for free treatment.

The vitiligo clinic is a stone's throw from the Cira Garcia clinic where Cubanacan offers a \$200 three-hour complete medical check-up for foreign visitors, with a 10 per cent discount for participants in congresses and international events.

The only centre of its kind in Spain, it has so far treated 90 people whose lives were crippled by their obsession with bingo, slot-machines, card games or other forms of gambling.

Cira Garcia caters to foreign residents and diplomats only. But regular patients complain that did not make it immune to common flaws of Cuban public service: bored, ill-humoured personnel and indifferent attention.

Switzerland hazardous waste convention meets at Basel

BASEL — Top government officials from over 100 countries converged on Basel on 20-22 March to seek final agreement on a treaty to control and limit the international transport and disposal of hazardous waste.

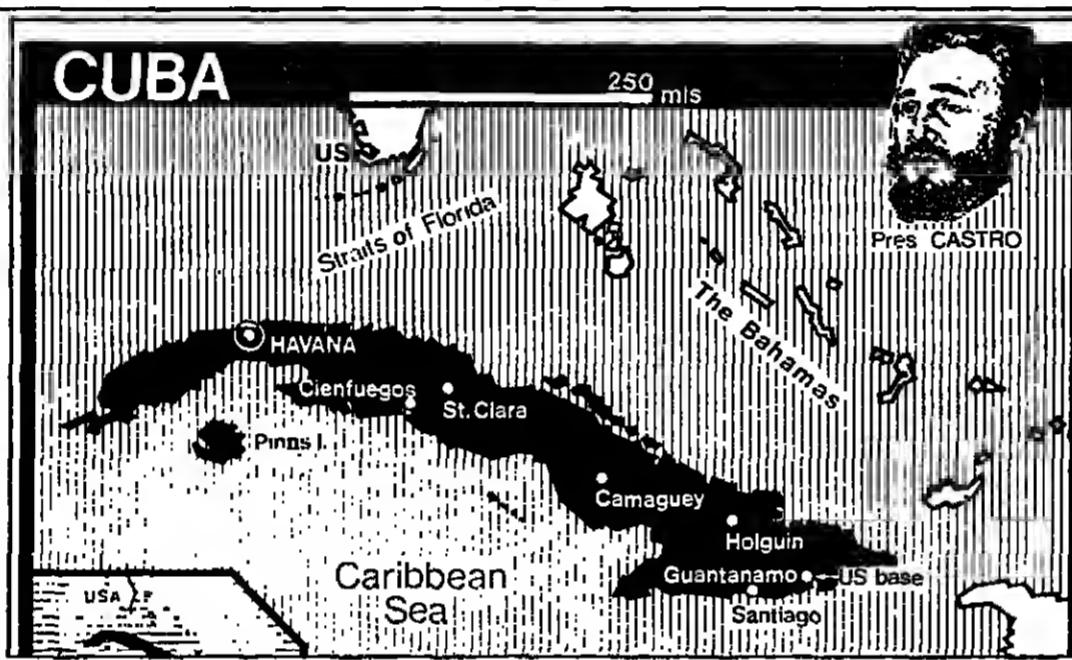
Mustapha K. Tolba, executive director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), which has convened the conference, admitted that "several highly controversial questions still have to be resolved."

The convention continued discussions from the last meeting in Luxembourg in the first week of February, concerning issues such as the rights of transit countries and the right innocent passage: off-shore territories; flags of convenience; the responsibility of states and illegal traffic, and bi-

lateral, multilateral or regional agreements.

In his closing statement, Tolba said "our agreement has not halted the commerce in poison. But it has signalled the international resolve to eliminate the menace hazardous wastes pose to the welfare of our shared environment and to the health of the world's peoples."

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Cordoba — an escape from bingo and debts

By Frances Kerr
Reuter

CORDOBA — Bingo was more than a pleasant evening out for 53-year-old Spanish businessman Jose. It was an obsession which shattered his life and drove him to attempt suicide.

Now free of his addiction, Jose says he could not have broken the habit without the help of Acoyer, a special centre in the southern Spanish city of Cordoba which treats compulsive gambling as an illness rather than a vice.

Acoyer was set up last June by Dr. Roman Fernandez, who worked at a centre for alcoholics and spotted signs of another addiction among some of his patients.

Other sectors in which Cuba can use its potential to become a "medical power" are cornea, kidney, bone marrow transplants and brain tissue transplant for Parkinson's disease sufferers. An assembly-line operation treatment for nearsightedness that began last year is only the second of its kind in the world, after Moscow.

Cira Garcia caters to foreign residents and diplomats only. But regular patients complain that did not make it immune to common flaws of Cuban public service: bored, ill-humoured personnel and indifferent attention.

Finally, comparing the man he had been with what he had become, guilty about the effects on his wife and three children and bitterly aware of the mess he had made of his life, Jose saw suicide as the only way out and took an overdose of pills.

After recovering, he became one of Acoyer's first patients.

"The most important thing was meeting other people with the same problem, realising I was not a unique case," said Jose.

Like Jose, 41-year-old businessman Manuel — also not his real name — virtually wrecked his life, spending up to \$2,600 a month on bingo.

The need to satisfy his habit drove Manuel to steal from his business. He lost his job and did a spell in prison which then made it hard to get another job. His family broke up — his wife and child moved out — and he sought solace with more gambling.

"It was impossible to get out, I didn't see any way out," Manuel said, adding he also thought frequently of suicide.

Acoyer's patients, more often men than women but not from any particular social class, are often using gambling to escape family or work problems, Fernandez said.

"They no longer play to win, they play to play and it becomes a way of running away from their problems. The slot machine or whatever becomes their companion. They feel pleasure while playing and desolation afterwards."

By the time they come to the centre, a "financial jolt" has woken them up to their problem — Fernandez has seen patients with debts of up to \$220,000 — but they are unable to break the habit alone.

Group sessions, getting addicts to compare their lives and realise they are not unique in their addiction, and involving families as

much as possible, are an important part of therapy.

For the first time, addicts find themselves treated with sympathy and understanding rather than with families' and society's customary incomprehension or rejection.

Drugs are not used, but the centre's psychologists try to turn compulsion into a phobia, persuading patients to see gambling as the cause of their problems rather than an escape.

Acoyer, which is funded by donations and run by doctors giving their time free, says it has had an 80 per cent cure rate, with the remaining 20 per cent on the way to recovery.

It has attracted a third of its patients from outside Cordoba and is now opening a branch in Madrid, responding to a problem which Fernandez reckons could affect up to three per cent of Spaniards, if families suffering the effects of an addict in the

Arabia.

As in his previous books, Salibi tests his theories against the geographical background of Western Arabia, tracing the coexistence of place names and locations of potential significance. Once again he illustrates how the geography of Palestine often impedes a clear interpretation of the Bible stories, whereas, specific areas in Arabia encourage their clarification.

Key stories about Christ, including his betrayal, crucifixion and resurrection are analysed. Also the story of the raising of Lazarus, which Salibi links with the Al-Issa myth.

Salibi's theories have won him few friends and this new book is unlikely to change that. It is possible that his work will be seen as a determined assault on long held beliefs, which is not his intention at all. As he explains in his introduction, "We are not out to expose any scandal or to prove Christian belief false."

Salibi is well aware of the critical attitude people hold of him. He has been roundly condemned by many in the academic community but he carries the courage of his convictions. "It is quite possible, indeed, that you will be tempted to dismiss the author as a pretentious crank, undertaking his work mainly for sensation."

Should you be tempted to do so, please first stop and ask yourself how certain you and other scholars in your specialist field are of the validity of any of the historical explanations regarding the Jesus question which have been advanced. A considerable assortment of theories on the subject have been proposed since the earliest days of New Testament criticism, yet none has so far gained general acceptance as being truly convincing. Even the theories which have produced the most learned opinion remain no more than tentative speculation."

Whatever conclusions others may reach about Salibi's intentions, the verdict on his book is that it is tantalising. Salibi meticulously unravels the threads like a seasoned mystery writer and it is impossible not to get caught up in the search for clues or to enjoy the logic of his discoveries — Academic File.

house are included.

But despite this he does not believe gambling addiction is particular to the Spanish temperament.

Lotteries and football pools, although firmly entrenched in Spanish social life, are "passive" and far less addictive than "active" games such as bingo or slot machines.

Those were legalised in 1976 following the death of late dictator Francisco Franco. Colourful one-armed bandits suddenly began tinkling their tunes out in bars and bingo opened all over the country, causing something of a boom in gambling addiction, Fernandez said.

Fernandez does not advocate a return to ban, but he does wish slot machines were less conspicuous, and a little less ubiquitous.

"Psychologists design these things, you know. They're deliberately made to be alluring."



CONCORD A NIGHT ON THE TOWN <small>Performances: 3:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.</small>	NIJOU Clint Eastwood.... in HEART BREAK RIDGE <small>Performances: 3:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.</small>	PLAZA "TOY SOLDERS" <small>Performances: 3:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.</small>
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Africans challenge World Bank on merits of reform

ADDIS ABABA (R) — African economic planners have challenged World Bank findings on the merits of reforms sponsored by it and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Strong devotees of World Bank and IMF structural adjustment programmes have fared worse than other countries, they argue in reports to a four-day meeting of African ministers for economic planning and development.

"The overall annual average growth rate for Africa as a whole was a relatively low 0.4 per cent between 1980-87, largely influenced by the poor performance of countries with strong adjustment programmes," said one report.

The report is a toned-down version of radical proposals presented to African finance ministers in March for a home-grown alternative to the conventional reforms prescribed by the IMF and the World Bank.

The report is expected to be adopted, possibly with further modification, when delegates to the current meeting are joined by their finance ministers Monday.

It favours long-term, "human-centred" rebuilding of economies, to replace IMF and World Bank measures which it says focus too much on short-term stabilisation of finances through spending cuts which undermine health, education and other needs.

Drawn up by the United Na-

mes than those that did not."

The commission attributed the disparity to its use of weighted averages while it said the bank used unweighted ones.

The African reports said certain criteria used in the World Bank report were vague and there was some lack of uniformity in use of country groupings.

Its findings also failed to take account of different levels of structural deficiencies among countries, and factors such as weather, commodity market conditions, foreign fund inflows and debt, the reports alleged.

The World Bank report, prepared jointly with the U.N. Development Programme, said although the region still faced difficulties, encouraging signs had emerged in recent years which "though still preliminary, augur well for the future."

The commission's executive secretary, Adebayo Adedeji, in a 1989 economic report issued Thursday, warned African countries not to be lulled into a false sense of security.

"Any attempt to portray the economic situation currently prevailing in Africa in rosy terms, to minimise the impact of an adverse external environment and to depict the effects of structural adjustment programmes as having been always positive... is cynical in the extreme," he said.

The economies of the five countries north of the Sahara meantime grew 1.5 per cent.

The World Bank, in a report released one month ago entitled Africa's Adjustment and Growth in the 1980s, said: "The evidence points to better overall economic performance in countries that pursue strong reform programs."

Banking is booming in Luxembourg

LUXEMBOURG (R) — Despite a threat from the European Community (EC) to its cherished tax breaks, Luxembourg's banking centre is booming.

While other financial centres are still sifting people following the October 1987 stock market crash, Luxembourg banks can't hire staff fast enough.

Banks and investment funds are queuing for permission to set up in the grand duchy. According to Pierre Jaans, head of the monetary authority, the Institut Monétaire Luxembourgeois, about 10 more foreign banks are set to join around 140 already there.

"The financial centre is still growing. The number of banks is increasing, buildings are going up and we are hiring new people. Compared to other financial centres this is quite surprising," said Damien Wigny, a director of Kreidelsbank S.A. Luxembourgeoise.

No one here welcomed proposals in February by the EC's executive commission to crack down on tax evasion and stop Luxembourg acting as a haven in the centre of the Community's barrier-free internal market after 1992.

But government leaders are now confident that they can block the proposals, or at least extract the sting from them.

And many optimists say the financial sector in Luxembourg, which accounts directly or indirectly for up to 20 per cent of economic activity, is now mature enough in any case to survive on expertise and innovation rather than tax benefits.

"We realise the future of the financial centre cannot be based on special fiscal treatment. What we must do is give service in a more and more sophisticated environment," Wigny said.

The EC's smallest state, Luxembourg used to be heavily dependent on only one industry,

approved unanimously and Luxembourg, with some support from Britain, has already said it will veto the proposed withholding tax.

Luxembourg Prime Minister Jacques Santer also moved in late March to ward off any EC attack on banking secrecy by rushing through a decree confirming it is illegal for banks to give information on their clients to tax authorities.

"We believe that banking secrecy is just as important as for example the secrecy in the medical field," explained stock exchange chairman Edmond Israel.

Even if the tax comes, bankers believe they could live with it and even make money out of telling clients how to avoid it.

"This proposal," one banker said, "is like a gruyere (cheese), full of holes for the client with lots of cheese for the bankers."

The European Commission itself has already exempted from the tax Eurobonds, share dividends and investment by non-EC residents, and more loopholes may be created in negotiations between EC ministers.

"This proposal is so full of loopholes it is ridiculous," said Paul Helminger, a member of the Luxembourg parliament. "The minimally sophisticated client going to a minimally sophisticated bank is going to find lots of ways round it."

But all tax matters must be

EC urged to meet Japanese car challenge

SAN SEBASTIAN, Spain (R) — A top European Community (EC) official Friday urged industry ministers of the 12-nation trading block to scrap restrictions on Japanese car imports and gear up for increased competition.

Martin Bangemann, a member of the EC's Executive Commission who is responsible for international trade issues, said the single market issues, said the single market for goods and services which will operate in the Community after 1992 should shun protectionism.

"There is no question of a fortress Europe, the Community is determined to respect its international obligation on trade," Bangemann told an informal meeting of ministers in this sea-side resort in northern Spain's highly industrialised Basque region.

Bangemann's stand was strongly supported by West Germany

ECONOMIC NEWS BRIEFS

IDB earmarks \$126m in financing

NICOSIA (R) — The Islamic Development Bank (IDB) has earmarked \$126 million to finance development projects, grants and trade in member states, the Islamic News Agency has said. It said the Jeddah-based bank agreed to finance four development projects worth 27,290 million Islamic dinars (\$36 million) in Bangladesh, Sudan, Oman and Algeria. The 46-member IDB will finance nine trade operations worth 66,115 million dinars (\$87.5 million) and will grant \$2.15 million to Islamic institutions, it added.

Moroccans moan over tomato price hikes

RABAT (R) — Moroccans are moaning because of a sudden 400 per cent increase in the price of tomatoes, a basic ingredient of the traditional "harira soup" during the Ramadan fast. A tour of the Rabat market revealed they were being retailed at eight dirhams per kilogramme when they were only two dirhams less than a month ago. "It's a scandal," an ardent housewife said. The merchant shrugged his shoulders and said wholesalers were charging seven dirhams. Morocco is a major tomato producer and exported 155,000 tonnes last season. The Association of Vegetable Growers said output had declined by almost half this season although acreage was up by 20 per cent. A spokesman said producers were getting four dirhams a kilogramme and he could not explain why production had fallen despite heavy rain in February and March. The pro-government daily Maroc Soir reported that 3,000 tonnes of tomatoes were being exported for the first time to neighbouring Algeria this month. The opposition daily Al Bayane, which claimed tomatoes were being offered at ten dirhams in Casablanca or 500 per cent more than in mid-March, blamed the increase on the authorities and their failure to enforce price controls during Ramadan.

Foreigners own 1% of U.S. farm land

WASHINGTON (AP) — Foreigners continue to won just under one per cent of U.S. agricultural land, slightly more than a year ago, the Agricultural Department has reported. The department's Economic Research Service said its 1988 year-end review of reports under the decade-old agricultural foreign investment disclosure act found about 12.5 million acres in foreign hands, 99,100 acres more than reported in 1987. Much of the ownership is concentrated in the United Kingdom, Canada, France, West Germany, the Netherlands Antilles, the Netherlands and Switzerland. Those countries combined to account for about 60 per cent of all foreign-held acreage. The report said that "93 per cent of the foreign-owned acreage will remain in agricultural production, according to foreign owners."

U.S. rejects ADC suit, upholds GSP for Israel

WASHINGTON (AP) — A U.S. review panel has recommended upholding Israel's trade privileges with the United States, rejecting a suit filed by an Arab American group, sources have revealed.

The ruling by the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) has been submitted to President George Bush for his approval, and an announcement is expected this week, the sources added.

A spokeswoman for the USTR declined to discuss the panel's findings, but other officials said a complaint filed against Israeli labour practices by the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) last year was rejected.

The ADC, which lobbies for the rights of Arab Americans, last year accused Israel of violating international labour and union protection laws for thousands of Palestinians who work in Israel and in the occupied territories.

According to U.S. law, Israel stood to lose trading privileges if enjoys under the General System of Preferences (GSP), which grants dozens of countries the right to export products to the United States free of duties. The United States agreed to investigate the complaint, along with petitions against Haiti, Liberia and Malaysia and held hearings late last year.

The trade panel contended that Israel had taken steps in recent months to rectify some violations of workers' rights and therefore deserved continued GSP rights, said one source.

The panel declined to rule on the complaint about Israeli practices in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, citing U.S. policy of not recognising what Israel claims as its "legal" rights over the occupied territories, said another source who also spoke on condition of anonymity.

That ruling was based on a recommendation from the State Department's legal adviser, said the source.

Abdeen Jabara, who heads the ADC, said that the very fact that bearings were held on Israel's labour practices towards Palestinians "was an important and positive thing because it raises the consciousness of how Palestinians are treated by Israel."

He said the finding that some rights had been violated means that Israel "has not been given a clean bill of health."

Study highlights Jordanian exports

AMMAN (J.T.) — A study prepared by Ali Dajani, advisor at the Amman Chamber of Industry, has revealed that Jordan sold its national products to 64 countries during 1987 and that the total revenues from those products in that year amounted to JD 248.8 million.

The study shows that Jordan sold products to Arab countries,

the European Community, East Europe, North and South America, Asian nations as well as Australia and New Zealand.

Dajani noted in his study that Jordanian exporters enjoy good financial credit facilities and exemptions on income tax up to 10 per cent on sold products.

In his study, Dajani referred to the August 1988 measures issued

by the government, describing them as incentives to stimulate exports.

These measures, he said, have created an incentive to set up companies specialising in exporting Jordanian products and paved the way for new facilities to import semi-finished and primary materials for re-export.

Jordan buys Syrian fruits

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan has drawn up contracts with Syrian exporters of agricultural products to sell Jordan fruits worth JD 2 million, according to Al Dustour daily quoting the director-general of the Jordan Agriculture Marketing and Processing Company (JAMPCO).

The report said that under the initial agreement, Jordan is to import apples, apricots, dried figs, raisins and cherries.

It said that by providing this consignment of fruits, Syria will have settled its dues to JAMPCO. According to the paper, Jordan will soon reach a barter agreement with Syria converting agricultural products which will take effect as of the coming year.

U.S. jobless rate falls

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. unemployment rate dipped in March to a 16-year low of five per cent despite a slowed rate in the creation of jobs, the government reported Friday. The Labour Department said 180,000 new jobs were added to non-farm payrolls last month, the lowest figure since 154,000 in August 1988 and down from a revised February figure of 280,000. The slower rate of job creation, affected somewhat by the Eastern Airlines strike, indicates some slowing in the economy. But there were signs of continued strength as well. The number of factory jobs remained stable and the average factory work week fell slightly, by 0.2 hours to 40.9 hours. Average overtime was unchanged at 3.9 hours.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

		Saturday, April 8, 1989		Central Bank official rates	
		Buy	Sell	French franc	US dollar
U.S. dollar		528.0	542.0	404.8	403.1
Pound Sterling		910.3	919.8	524.0	526.7
Deutschmark		286.2	289.1	84.0	84.7
Swiss franc		325.5	328.9	39.1	39.4
Indian rupee (for 100)		—	—	136.8	137.9

Weekly Amman Financial Market trading

AMMAN (J.T.) — The following table summarises trading activities at the Amman Financial Market during the week starting Saturday, April 1, '89 and ending Wednesday April 5, '89. (Figures in Jordanian dinars).

Name of company	Number of shares	Volume of trade	Opening price	Closing price	Par value
Banking and financial institutions					

Industrial Development Bank	26935	43055	1,600	1,600	1,000
Petra Bank	500	1250	2,550	2,500	1,000
Jordan Islamic Bank	5900	11955	2,000	2,050	1,000
Jordan Kuwait Bank	2614	3674	1,430	1,400	1,000
Jordan Gulf Bank	21940	28038	1,290	1,300	1,000
Housing Bank	2445	4616	1,870	1,900	1,000
Arab Jordan Investment Bank	—	—	—	—	1,000
Carib Arabian Bank	20	600	31,000	30,000	5,000
Bank of Jordan	1422	24196	15,300	15,450	5,000
Arab Bank	560	82223	147,000	147,000	10,000
Jordan National Bank	28431	71001	2,480	2,510	1,000
Jordan Finance House for Development	34631	74054	2,410	2,350	1,000
Jordan Investment and Finance Corporation	—	—	—	—	1,000
Finance and Credit Corporation	—	—	—	—	1,000
National Financial Investments	3471	3129	0,900	0,890	1,000
Arab Finance Corporation (Jordan)	—	—	—	—	1,000
Jordan Securities Corporation	—	—	—	—	1,000</td

Sports

JORDAN TIMES, SUNDAY, APRIL 9, 1989 7

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Injured Maradona to miss AC Milan

NAPLES (R) — Diego Maradona of Napoli has been ruled out of Sunday's vital Italian League match at defending champions AC Milan with a thigh strain. The Argentine star, who interrupted a three-week injury break Wednesday to boost Napoli to a 2-0 UEFA Cup semifinal first leg victory against Bayern Munich, failed to leave Naples with the squad on Saturday. "Maradona's muscle is still strained and causing pain. The player will resume gradual training from Monday," club doctor Emilio Acampora said. Maradona's absence is a major blow to Napoli's chances against AC Milan, who underlined their top form with a 1-1 draw at Real Madrid in Wednesday's European Cup semifinal first leg.

Top seeds rise effortlessly

DORTMUND, West Germany (R) — Top seeds Chen Longcan and Wei Qingguang continued their untroubled run towards a second world doubles table tennis title with a swift win over Czechoslovak qualifiers Tomas Janci and Miroslav Cecava on Saturday. The Chinese pair, who are also Olympic champions, have not dropped a game in the competition. They beat the Czechoslovaks in the quarter-finals. They now meet Joerg Rosskopf and Steffen Fetzner, who gave hosts West Germany their best-ever showing in the men's doubles with a defeat of Pole Andrzej Grubba and Frenchman Jean-Philippe Gatien. The victory was sweet revenge for the 19-year-old Rosskopf, who was knocked out of the singles by Grubba on Friday in four games. The crowd whistled and jeered when first Fetzner, in the opening game, and then Rosskopf in the decider were penalised a point for holding their rackets below the table as they served.

Frenchwoman approaching West Coast

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Frenchwoman Anne Liardet headed for San Francisco on Friday, short of the speed record for sailing around Cape Horn from New York but within striking distance of another record she will never lose. Liardet, in her 50-foot (15-metre) trimaran Finistere Bretagne, is the first woman to try for the record over the grueling 14,500-mile (23,300-kilometre) passage from New York harbour — the famous clipper route of the 1800s. Warren Luhrs, sailing Thursday's Child, set the new record on Feb. 12 by covering the distance in 80 days, 20 hours, smashing the 135-year record of 89 days, 12 hours established by the American clippers Flying Cloud. Attempts to break that record were generated by the Manhattan Yacht Club's trophy offer.

S. Korean champ crashes out

DORTMUND, West Germany (R) — Yoo Nam-Kyu's dreams of adding the world table tennis crown to his Olympic title were

brought to an abrupt halt by China's Xu Zengcai on Saturday. Xu, ranked 25th in the world, beat the South Korean 17-21 in the fourth round to reach a quarter-final tie with Swede Jorgen Persson later on Saturday. Left-handed penholder Yoo, the 1986 Asian champion, looked a shadow of the man who delighted the crowds in Seoul with his Olympic victory. He moved ahead only once in the final game, for 19-18. But Xu, Wu drew level and, with a mix of triumph, clinched victory on his first match point. With Yoo gone, only defending champion Jiang Jialiang of China and Swede Jan-Ove Waldner, the 1987 runner-up, remained from the top four seeds. Waldner had an easy fourth round win over Japanese champion Kiyoshi Saitoh, setting up a quarter-final against Hungarian veteran Tibor Klampar.

Borg to play final match in Japan

TOKYO (R) — Five-times Wimbledon champion Bjorn Borg said Friday his exhibition match against American former arch-rival John McEnroe next week would be his last public tennis appearance. "This will be my last exhibition match," the 32-year-old Swede said. "I've been practising for two hours every day since the beginning of January this year and I'm in very, very good shape." The match in Hiroshima April 15 is the last in a four-game exhibition series which has been played in Singapore, Manila and Taipei. Borg, who lost to McEnroe in the 1981 Wimbledon final, has made only infrequent appearances in exhibition matches since he retired from tournament tennis in 1983. He said he planned to devote himself in future to his sports business and to helping young people improve their tennis skills.

Sternmark gives farewell party

SALEN, Sweden (AP) — As news conferences go, the one staged Friday at his mother's ski area did not yield much information. The big news already was well known: Ingemar Sternmark was here for a final tribute to his countrymen.

Swedes throughout the country lived and died with Sternmark during a remarkable 16-year career of World Cup ski racing, and that is perhaps his greatest legacy. He converted a nation of cross-country skiers into devotees of Alpine racing, then gave them 16 years of thrills.

Now, after 270 races and an unprecedented 86 victories, one of the ski areas that thrived under the Swedish passion for Alpine racing opened its doors for a weekend celebration dubbed the "Ingemar races."

Sweden is not alone in hailing skiing's greatest winner, as shown by the luminaries who joined Sternmark for the news conference.

On hand were 21 other World Cup racers, including former World Cup overall champions Gustavo Thoeni and Piero Gros.

SOUTH

Both vulnerable, South deals.

NORTH

♦ A J 6

♦ Q 10 8

♦ J 6 2

♦ 3 9 7 5

WEST

Both vulnerable, South deals.

EAST

♦ 10 9 8

♦ 7 4 3

♦ 7 6 5

♦ A X 9 7 4

♦ 10 8 5

♦ Q 6 2

♦ A 4

SOUTH

♦ K Q

♦ A K J 9 2

♦ Q 3

♦ K 10 8 3

The bidding:

South West North East

1 ♦ Pass 2 ♦ Pass

4 ♦ Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of ♦

Many of our favorite bridge players know how to enjoy a good meal. Perhaps their spouses will enjoy reading some good hands while preparing some of the recipes that appear in D.J. Cook's *Cook & Deal II* (226 pp., hard cover, spiral bound \$15.95 plus \$2 postage from the author, P.O. Box 3235, Beach Stn., Vero Beach, Fla. 32964). It combines some excellent recipes with 52 bridge hands of more than passing interest. This hand is typical.

South's jump to four hearts is a little aggressive. With two queens of

clubs, declarer can ruff in the

ace of diamonds and one in clubs. In addition, there is the danger of a second club loser if declarer misses the suit. However, a dash of deception could eliminate all guesswork.

Under the king of diamonds declarer should sacrifice his queen. That puts West under a lot of pressure. From his point of view, the ace of diamonds could get ruffed, setting up the jack for a critical discard.

But any switch by West presents declarer with his contract. If West shifts to a club, East can win and return a diamond, but now declarer gets two club discards—one on the jack of diamonds and the other on a spade. And if West shifts to a spade, declarer wins, draws trump and takes a diamond discard on the third spade.

The only defense to give declarer a chance to go wrong is for West to cash his top diamonds, then exit in any suit save clubs. But after South's morsel at trick one, we admit that we wouldn't have found that defense.

"We will show no mercy once we're on the courts," John Hanham, a conservative member of the House of Commons from Exeter, said through a telephone hook-up from London. "We've been training here in the shadows of Wimbledon."

"I hope the Anglo-U.S. relationship will survive this ordeal," said Richard Ralph, a representative of the British embassy.

They play will be held in connection with the Dow World senior open for players over 45, scheduled for May 15 to 21 at Congressional Country Club in suburban Washington.

Each team will consist of eight lawmakers and two guests, and play will include five doubles matches between congressional and parliamentary competitors. The first team to win 13 sets will be declared winner of the Congress-Parliament Challenge Cup and will receive a trophy from the archives of Wimbledon, officials said.

Breaux, the captain of the U.S. team, said members tentatively scheduled to play include Senate majority leader George Mitchell; Sen. Lloyd Bentsen, the 1988 Democratic vice presidential nominee; Rep. Stephen Solarz; Rep. Byron L. Dorgan, and Sen. Timothy Wirth.

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, APRIL 9

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

— As Charted By The Carroll Righter Astrological Foundation.

GENERAL TENDENCIES: There may be no dull moments during this interesting and romantic day. Expect an increase in social contacts and romantic possibilities. Feelings can stay out of bounds when love enters the picture.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) You get pleasure from siblings whose behavior is magnetic and outlandish. Streamline the family fun and play the young mother's request.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 18) Patience is required when the day's game plan turns into more than doing. Surprises will change.

GEMINI (May 19 to June 17) You prefer to be in motion. A short trip to a clever spot will please someone special. Spring fever can get you into a romantic mood.

MOON CHILDREN (June 18 to Jul. 21) Contact a friend who has been silent for too long. Insecure feelings have no firm foundation unless you give them that power.

LEO (Jul. 22 to Aug. 21) You ponder over a sense of direction, purpose and accomplishment. Search your numerous talents for a creative answer.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) Emphasis is on home activities, springtime cleanup, refurbishing and reconditioning. A fresh approach has you feeling good.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) You may feel tied down to a boring routine and yearn for adventure.

"The Stars impel; they do not compel." What you make of your life is largely up to you!

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Davis Cup quarterfinals: USA 2, France 0

Agassi struggles, beats Leconte

SAN DIEGO (R) — Regaining control after a third set lapse, Andre Agassi beat Henri Leconte to give the United States a commanding 2-0 lead over France in their Davis Cup world group quarterfinal tie on Friday.

Earlier John McEnroe, at the height of his craft, crushed Yannick Noah in the opening match of the tie.

Holders West Germany were level at 1-1 with Czechoslovakia while Yugoslavia led Spain 2-0.

Agassi was cruising against Leconte, playing what he called his best tennis ever before losing his grip from 5-2 ahead in the third set.

Agassi pointed to his opponent's sudden outburst of brilliant shotmaking as the factor that shook his stranglehold on the match.

Leconte said later: "I was trying to come in often to the net and take some risks."

Agassi had, however, opened the way for Leconte with a careless error on his first match point at 5-2. Hoping to end with an ace, Agassi tried two hard serves but double-faulted and went on to lose his serve.

Two games later, serving at 5-4, Agassi had a 40-0 and triple match point. Leconte responded

by saving the first with a back-hand winner, forcing an Agassi error on the second and then hitting a volley winner on the last.

"All you can do is applaud him when he hits shots like that," Agassi said.

With his confidence flying, Leconte won the next two points to break serve for 5-5. Two games later Leconte broke again for the set 7-5.

McEnroe's masterpiece lasted one hour and 55 minutes and evoked comparisons with his form during his reign as the world number one in 1981-84.

"It was very satisfying," McEnroe said. "I don't need to convince myself any further that I can play well against anybody."

"I did what you like to do to any player and that is confuse him and make him not sure what to do," said McEnroe, whose Davis Cup singles won-lost record of 38-7 is his country's best.

Said Noah: "I just had my butt kicked. What can I say, I felt like I was just there to make him look good."

After a slow and nervous opening, McEnroe caught fire in the eighth game of the first set. But he rallied from a 0-3 deficit with his powerful serves and took full control of the match to win in two hours and 35 minutes.

"Once I got that service break in the eighth game, everything clicked in, everything went well," McEnroe said.

He dominated every aspect. He served 10 aces, Noah had three. Noah also committed five double faults. McEnroe broke serve five times. Noah managed to win just 14 points off McEnroe's serve and never had a break point.

Noah best moment was in the opening game, when he attacked McEnroe's serve in the first game and forcing two deuces.

The winning team plays a semi-final from July 21-23 against the Czechoslovakia-West Germany tie.

Becker triumphant

PRAGUE, Czechoslovakia (AP)

Boris Becker served 22 aces to beat Karel Novak 7-6 (7-5), 6-4, 6-4 and give defending champion West Germany a 1-0 lead over Czechoslovakia in their Davis Cup world group quarterfinal tie Friday.

The only time Becker was in trouble came in the second set. But he rallied from a 0-3 deficit with his powerful serves and took full control of the match to win in two hours and 35 minutes.

David Speedie

Defender Mark Bowen took over in goal but did not have to make a save as Coventry captain Brian Kilcline blasted his spot kick off target.

Norwich, beaten by Liverpool last Saturday and by Nottingham Forest Wednesday, took the lead at Coventry through Robert Fleck in the 13th minute but David Phillips and Speedie struck in the 23rd and 67th minutes for Coventry.

Arsenal had to work hard for their victory over Everton after Dixon had driven in the early opener when goalkeeper Neville Southall punched out Brian Marwood's corner.

Quinn, in the starting line-up for the first time this season, sealed victory in the 65th minute, turning in a header from substitute Paul Merson to steady Arsenal's nerves after Everton had threatened an equaliser.

Arsenal reclaims top slot

LONDON (R) — Arsenal wrested the leadership of the English First Division back from Liverpool Saturday, responding to the formidable challenge of the all-conquering title-holders with a 2-0 win over Everton.

Liverpool toppled Arsenal from the top spot for the first time in 1989 when they trounced Sheffield Wednesday 5-1 in a match brought forward to avoid a clash with the Grand National horse race at nearby Aintree.

Liverpool, timing their championship charge to perfection, moved ahead on goal difference after their eighth successive league victory but held the distinction for just 3½ hours.

Full-back Lee Dixon netted his first goal for Arsenal four minutes into the Londoners' home match at Highbury and towering

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Urgent 5-party talks under way on Namibia

WINDHOEK (Agencies) — Officials from five nations flew to a remote Namibian safari lodge Saturday in a bid to halt fighting between Namibian nationalist fighters and South African-led security forces and save the territory's U.N.-backed peace plan.

Delegations from Cuba, Angola and South Africa, architects of the faltering Namibian accords, aim to heal the rift caused by an incursion of an estimated 1,900 fighters of the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO).

The clashes, which erupted last Saturday, have cost almost 300 lives, derailed the peace process and cast doubt on the prospects for Namibian independence.

All sides have expressed willingness to resurrect the peace accords but officials would not predict the outcome of the talks, scheduled to last at least until Sunday.

"They all talk about give and take, but it depends who does the giving and who does the taking," one U.N. official remarked before the delegations sat down for the talks.

Observing the meeting at the Mount Etjo safari lodge, 200 kilometres northwest of Windhoek, are the U.N. State Department's southern Africa expert Chester Crocker and Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Anatoly Adamushin.

Crocker and Adamushin arrived after talks in Luanda Friday with Angolan, SWAPO and U.N. officials, which mooted agreeing to SWAPO's demands to establish U.N.-monitored bases within Namibia.

Meanwhile, battles between the South African-led security forces and SWAPO fighters continued into an eighth straight day, police said.

The U.N. has allowed South Africa to move a limited number

fighters to surrender by midday Saturday or face intensified security-force action, but there was no indication that SWAPO planned to lay down arms as the deadline passed, police Chief Inspector Derek Brune said.

The South African-installed administrator of the territory, Louis Pienaar, said Friday there was a "de facto suspension" of the U.N. independence plan because of the widespread fighting near Namibia's northern border with Angola. He said elections planned for November could be affected by the conflict.

Pik Botha, South Africa's foreign minister, said he had informed U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar about a South African decision to activate an unspecified number of additional soldiers. A major reason for the move, Botha said, was that SWAPO fighters were approaching areas where white farmers lived.

The U.N. has allowed South Africa to move a limited number



Journalists look at the bodies of 22 SWAPO fighters killed and left in a field during this week's clashes in Namibia

of troops from their bases to support police units, but Botha said Friday that the security forces "at the present level are not able to stem the incursion."

Botha said South Africa remained committed to implementing independence in Namibia and that the U.N. plan had not been formally suspended.

The U.N. Security Council said Friday it was satisfied that South Africa still sought to grant independence to the territory it has ruled since World War I.

Soviet sub sinks; Moscow says no danger of radiation

MOSCOW (R) — The Soviet Union said Saturday there was no radiation danger from a Soviet nuclear-powered submarine which sank off northern Norway but officials refused to say whether there were nuclear missiles on board.

The Soviet news agency TASS confirmed there had been deaths among the crew when the submarine sank Friday evening, some six hours after a fire broke out on board.

Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, in a message to Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, said the reactor on board the submarine had been shut down and there was no danger of radiation leakage.

Western naval experts described the submarine as a Mike class vessel which could carry cruise and anti-submarine mis-

siles. Norwegian authorities said up to 12 crew members were killed in the accident.

The TASS report described the vessel as a "nuclear-powered torpedo submarine" but did not give its class or say whether it was actually carrying nuclear weapons.

A Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman, Yuri Gremitsky, said the brief TASS report included all the information provided on the incident by Soviet military officials.

"Western sources say it is the Mike class, I cannot say," Gremitsky said.

TASS said the submarine sank in 1,500 metres of water at 5:15 p.m. in international waters about 180 kilometres southwest of Bear Island.

The rest are conventionally-armed and nuclear or diesel-powered.

Canadian police red-faced after bizarre bus hijack

"Obviously, we're going to have to find out how come we didn't know that he was coming in this direction."

In a note to police, Yacoub said he was a member of the "Lebanese Christian Liberation Front" and hijacked the bus to highlight a demand for the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon and the release of Lebanese prisoners allegedly held in Syria.

The RCMP said Yacoub came to Canada from Lebanon in 1976, but the group he claimed to belong to did not exist.

The hijacking began shortly before noon when Yacoub, armed with a revolver, seized control of the bus soon after it left Montreal.

At a toll booth of the Champlain Bridge, which crosses the St. Lawrence River, Yacoub told an elderly man to get off, then ordered the bus to head to Ottawa.

"You've got to realise that this bus was going to New York," Favreau said. He quickly added:

"Obviously, we're going to have to find out how come we didn't know that he was coming in this direction."

In the next five hours, Yacoub released five hostages, one or two at a time.

Four employees of the U.S. embassy, across the street from parliament, fled by dismantling a window in the building next door and crawling out.

Finally, Yacoub freed the remaining five hostages and surrendered. Police said he was to be charged Saturday.

Favreau said Yacoub had a minor criminal record but no history of mental illness. Asked why Yacoub had decided to give up, he said: "He obviously came to the conclusion he was not accomplishing anything."

Yacoub tried to have the bus drive around the grounds of the Canadian parliament, but police forced it to drive onto a lawn, where its tyres got stuck in wet grass.

Police cars and sharpshooters targeted the bus and began negotiating with Yacoub.

In the next five hours, Yacoub released five hostages, one or two at a time.

One armoured car roared into the Champ-de-Mars Plaza outside the palace at 7:40 p.m. (2340 GMT) firing its cannon. Bystanders scurried for safety. Repeated volleys of cannon, machinegun and Howitzer fire rang out from the area immediately in front of the barracks and continued more than an hour later.

Reporters watching from a second-floor balcony of the Holiday Inn a few blocks away periodically dived for cover as explosions reverberated through the hotel and tracer bullets zipped overhead.

It was impossible to immediately determine the significance of the shooting. State-run radio played French romantic songs in the midst of the explosions.

At around 10 p.m. (0200 GMT), an uniformed Dessalines soldier appeared at the Holiday Inn and told a reporter that there were many casualties in the barracks. There was no way to independently confirm the report.

A woman who lives near the barracks said a large hole had been blown in the building.

Telephone lines were jammed at the U.S. embassy.

A Western European diplomat who spoke on condition of anonymity said the presidential guard "has attacked the Dessalines barracks."

A man who answered the telephone inside the palace and identified himself only as a civil servant said, "There is a military operation between the Dessalines barracks and the presidential guard."

Asked which side was in control, he laughed and said: "The government is in control of the situation."

A woman who lives in a house next to the barracks said by telephone that she could see two armoured cars in the street with their cannon aimed at the barracks.

The 1,000-man presidential guard has five armoured cars equipped with small cannon similar to large-caliber machineguns.

The white, neo-classical palace and the mustard-coloured Dessalines barracks are close to each other, surrounded by the same wall.

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